

Cherwell District Council
Equality and Climate Impact Assessment
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
2024-2029

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Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	Wellbeing and Housing – Housing Services
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	New policy to cover existing service function
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	<p>It is a statutory requirement to complete a review of homelessness within a District area and produce a strategy to tackle the issue every 5 years. The review of homelessness analysis pressures on the service area, by analysing who is approaching the Council for assistance and what their housing circumstances are. It also reviews what housing outcomes they are able to achieve. The review also has a wider view of the local market conditions, regarding supply and affordability of accommodation across the tenures.</p> <p>The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our approach and actions to prevent and reduce with an overall aim of ending homelessness and rough sleeping within the District. The strategy also outlines that partnerships that are in place and how we will continue to involve and work in partnership to deliver accommodation and support service users.</p> <p>The strategy aligns with our key partners across the other Oxfordshire Districts, City and County Council's and the strategy encourages a positive partnership approach to engaging and resolving individual needs and housing difficulties and to be able to target and provide support for the most vulnerable and in need.</p>
Completed By	Richard Smith

Authorised By	Nicola Riley
Date of Assessment	November 2023

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The current Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was produced when Cherwell District Council was in a partnership with Oxfordshire County Council. The new and reviewed strategy therefore is a Cherwell focussed one.</p> <p>The previous strategy was produced at a time where the context of homelessness services and provision was heavily influenced by COVID 19 and this is reflected within the strategy and action plan. Since the production of the current strategy, Oxfordshire County Council have also produced a Countywide Homelessness Strategy, that works alongside the District strategies. Additionally, since the current strategy was produced, Cherwell District Council and the other Districts and City are in a co-commissioning partnership “Alliance” with Oxfordshire County Council. The Alliance therefore provides the vast majority of support services for those rough sleeping or at most risk of rough sleeping.</p> <p>The Council has therefore produced a new strategy and action plan that takes account of the changed national, local and organisational context.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Proposals</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>The strategy sets out the following vision and priorities:</p> <p>Vision</p> <p>Working in partnership to prevent homelessness and create new pathways that focus on customer needs to ensure a decent and affordable home for all.</p> <p>The four strategic priorities for our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-29 are:</p> <p>Priority 1 Identify the causes of homelessness, facilitating early interventions to ensure a pathway to housing and reducing rough sleeping.</p> <p>Priority 2 Ensure that our service is accessible to all; engaging and assisting households who have difficulty receiving our services.</p> <p>Priority 3 Deliver long term housing solutions and help sustain tenancies for the most vulnerable, creating resilience.</p> <p>Priority 4 Improve access to quality and affordable accommodation across all sectors for homeless households.</p> <p>The priorities provide the framework for the action plan, which cover the aims and projects that the Council will undertake as part of its homelessness prevention and reduction activities over the next 5 years.</p> <p>A strategy is required by legislation. Preventing, relieving and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping requires partnership working to deliver a range of services and accommodation options for people who may not be able to resolve their housing circumstances without assistance. This strategy sets out the need to further develop to meet and respond to the changing needs of the client group so that lasting prevention and accommodation options are provided that reduces the risk of repeat homelessness and housing crisis.</p>
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<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>The Review of Homelessness within Appendix 2 of the Report provides data and research findings of who is most likely to become homeless at which stage within the process. The strategy is also produced in consultation with the public and stakeholders, the outcomes of this are also within the report.</p> <p>With regard to impacts of the issue on certain communities and groups, in 2022-2023 within Cherwell,</p> <p>76.4% of approaches had a white background (13% of the total were unspecified so could be higher than 76.4%)</p> <p>76.6% advised they were a British or Irish citizen habitually residents in the UK or Ireland.</p> <p>44.9% advised they had a mental health issue or a history of one and 31.7% advised that they had a physical disability.</p> <p>60% of those approaching at the prevention stage were women</p> <p>53.1% of those approaching at the relief stage were single men</p> <p>73.3% of those approaching were between 18 and 45 years old.</p> <p>1.5% specified as not heterosexual or otherwise refused to say.</p> <p>33.2% specified that they were in some sort of work, which is higher than the 30.3% who advised they were registered unemployed.</p> <p>The review of homelessness and the consultation outcomes have influenced the priorities and action plan actions within the strategy document.</p>
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<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>Option 1 - To not have a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy</p> <p>This option has been rejected as it is not feasible due to it being a statutory requirement to have a Homelessness Strategy that is reviewed every 5 years.</p> <p>Option 2 - To continue having a joint strategy and not review at this time</p> <p>This option has been rejected due to the contextual issues outlined in above sections meaning that the current strategy does not contain fit for purpose outcomes and objectives.</p>
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Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Data shows that homelessness disproportionately affects younger people.</p> <p>The strategy proposes continuation of partnership working with the Alliance and the Young People Supported Accommodation pathway (YPSA) to ensure that support is provided and outcomes are available for this group</p>	<p>Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data.</p> <p>The reports we receive from service providers about the number of people accessing and requiring the relevant services will also show the impact.</p>	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring

Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Data shows that there is a considerable number of physical and mentally ill or disabled people facing homelessness.</p> <p>Priority Need categories within homelessness legislation ensure that the needs of this group are acknowledged when approaching and being assessed by the team.</p> <p>Wider contacts with Housing Strategy and Planning teams and the data we have and provide ensure that more housing that meets specific needs, such as mobility needs standards, is provided.</p>	Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data.	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Priority Need categories within homelessness legislation ensure that the needs of this group are acknowledged when approaching and being assessed by the team.</p> <p>A wider review of the Allocations Policy, that is part of the strategy, also ensures that pregnant women are prioritised for allocations to larger properties before a child is born</p>	None	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring
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Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Ethnicity information is collected by those undertaking assessments and the data shows that within Cherwell, the majority of those facing homelessness are White UK or Irish Nationals.</p> <p>The strategy and partnership approaches, particularly through more outreach work, could lead to more approach and engagement from minority groups, that may currently be hidden homeless or staying in otherwise unsatisfactory living arrangements.</p>	Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data.	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring
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Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Data shows that men are more affected by homelessness than women, particularly in rough sleeping numbers and those approaching at the Relief stage. However, women are more likely to approach at earlier stages.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse, which affects women more prevalently than men, is also an issue that is rising.</p>	<p>Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data.</p> <p>Services provided through the pathways respond to the needs and vulnerabilities of client groups to help them into appropriate accommodation.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse data is also collected. There are specific new clauses in the strategy regarding Domestic Abuse to look to address the increasing trend and improve access to support services.</p>	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring
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Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Data shows that there is a small minority of people identifying as non-heterosexual, below the average that would be expected. There is also a large group of people where it is undisclosed.</p> <p>As this information is known, we are therefore mindful of barriers that may be in place</p>	Data is reported to DLUHC through Delta reporting quarterly. Therefore, the impact will be seen in data	Head of Housing CDC	Annual monitoring
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Armed Forces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy proposes a review of the Housing Allocations scheme and Armed Forces are an additional preference category within the scheme. Therefore, additional priority is awarded to ensure access to services by this group	None	N/A	N/A
Carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The strategy proposes a review of the Housing Allocations scheme and carers and those requiring additional bedrooms for carers are part of the scheme and its review.	None	N/A	N/A
Areas of deprivation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Wider Impacts

Additional Wider Impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Other Council Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Providers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Social Value ¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

¹ If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Climate Change Impacts

OCC and CDC aim to be carbon neutral by 2030. How will your proposal affect our ability to reduce carbon emissions related to

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (* Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Energy use in our buildings or highways	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Our fleet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Staff travel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Purchased services and products (including construction)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maintained schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

We are also committed to enable Cherwell to become carbon neutral by 2030 and Oxfordshire by 2050. How will your proposal affect our ability to:

Climate change impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Enable carbon emissions reduction at district/county level?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	Annual
Person Responsible for Review	Head of Housing
Authorised By	Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing